DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 102 035 SO 007 929

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TITLE A Different View of Race Attitudes and Self Concepts in Black Pre School Children.
PUB DATE Aug 73
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Black Psychology, Symposium on Cultural and Political Aspects of Child Development (Detroit, Michigan, August 1973)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS *Early Childhood; Identification (Psychological); *Negro Attitudes; Negro Stereotypes; Psychological Testing; Race Relations; *Racial Attitudes; *Self Concept; Self Concept Tests; Sex Role

ABSTRACT

This research report provides data refuting the traditional view that the conflict between dominant white values and black values leads to self-hatred in black preschool children. Self-concepts, racial attitudes, racial identification, and sex-role typing were tested in groups of black children from an integrated urban area in Detroit, an all black small Mississippi town, an all black urban community, and a small African and Indian subsample. The results indicated that children in all four samples had good average self-concepts. The children from Mississippi had higher self-concept scores than those in Detroit. In Mississippi, children who scored high in self-concept also were more accurate in the use of appropriate race labels. Children in all the four reference groups saw themselves more positively than they felt they were perceived by their mothers, teachers, and peers. All four groups had similar racial attitude scores, indicating a white preference. There were no differences in racial attitudes between regions. The data support the idea that there is not a linear relationship between racial attitudes and self-concept. It indicates that black children have been able to compartmentalize their views of themselves. While feeling good about themselves, they still maintain a preference for white attributes. (DE)

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SYMPOSIUM: Cultural and Political Aspects of Child Development

A Different View of Race Attitudes and Self Concepts in Black Pre School Children[1]

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Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Black Psychology
Detroit, Michigan, August 24, 1973

[1]The Miss. and Mich. data were collected with the assistance of a University of Michigan Rachkam Research Grant, 1969. The DC I data collection was supported by a 1972 Howard University Faculty Grant. The DC II data were collected and are now being analyzed under an Office of Child Development Grant, #OCD-CB-282, 1973.

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A Different View of Race Attitudes and Self Concepts in Black Pre School Children

In my research on the development of the Black Child, I have concentrated on three aspects:

(1) The development of self esteem and racial attitudes of Black pre-school children;

(2) The relationship between these two variables; and

(3) The impact of demographic factors upon these developments.

I began to look at these variables as I viewed my own four children experiencing the pains of growing up Black in our society. The socialization process is difficult for any child, but it is even more so for the Black Child. He has a double developmental task: (1) to incorporate the dominant values of our society, while at the same time; he must (2) incorporate the values of the Black community and culture, which are often at conflict with the dominant society. This conflict, which is experienced universally by American Blacks, must be resolved in some manner in order that the individual may become a functioning adult.

The traditional view of the resolution of this conflict has been seen as having resulted in self hatred. The child was seen as developing an acceptance of the societal preference for white, implying a hatred of Blackness, a rejection of that which is Black: skin color, hair texture, facial and body features, and even speech patterns.

These negative racial attitudes have been obtained repeatedly in studies. Self concept and racial attitudes were assumed to have a linear relationship. The self hatred hypothesis has been widely accepted in the lay and professional literature (Clark and Clark, 1939, 1947, 1963; Goodman, 1952; Asher and Allen, 1969, et. al). There has been only limited questioning of this view (Porter, 1966, 1971; Greenwald and Oppenheim, 1968).

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More recent findings have indicated a more positive view of the Black Child's ethnic identity (J. McAdoo, 1970; Hraba and Grant, 1970; Fox and Barnes, 1971; and Ward and Baun, 1972). These desirable results have been attributed to the increase in Black consciousness and self pride within the Black community.

Much effort has gone into the study of the development of racial awareness, attitudes and self identification of Black children. Likewise, many authors have examined the development of self concepts and self esteem. However, these variables have not been combined in empirical investigations until recently (H. McAdoo, 1970; Ward and Braun, 1972). Care must be taken in reading other studies on these variables. Often authors have collected hard data on only one variable, i.e., race preference, but have extended the discussion into other areas, as when inaccurate perceptions of skin color are interpreted as being indicative of impaired self concepts. These interpretations may or may not be supported by data.

In contrast to the self hatred philosophy, four of us have just recently begun to take a different tactic. This has resulted from our concern with the depressingly negative view that has been projected of our children, similar to that dominant view of the Black family. I was motivated also by my data which repeatedly showed little relationship between race attitude and self concepts. In fact, while my children did continue to give white oriented responses, they consistently obtained good self concept scores.

The four of us, John McAdoo, Margaret Spencer, and Bill Cross, had independently begun to explore the same hypotheses and this summer we have been able to confer with each other. We have explored the similar hypotheses that there is not a linear relationship between RA and SC. Instead, Margaret Spencer, (Personal Communication, 1973), has hypothesized that there will be a curvilinear relationship between the two variables in the data she is now collecting and analyzing in

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in Chicago. Bill Cross of Princeton (1973) feels that RA and SC are able to develop somewhat independently from each other. He is now in the process of developing a conceptual framework which will help explain this different view.

It appears that the Black Child has indeed internalized the societal preference for white attributes. Yet at the same time has been able to develop a positive view of his own worth. The child thus seems able to compartmentalize his views of himself and of his racial group.

To give further light to this different view of SC and RA, I would like to briefly go over the research findings that my husband and I have collected in four settings:

(1) An integrated urban area in the midwest (Detroit metropolitan area);

(2) An all Black small town in the South (Mound Bayou, Mississippi);

(3) An all Black urban community (Washington, D.C.), over a two year period; and

(4) A small African and Indian subsample was picked up in 1973, to begin the cross-cultural comparison of attitudes of dark-skinned children in other cultures.

In each setting, we have assessed the SC, RA, RI (race identification), SxRA (sex role attitude), and RP (race preference), self concepts, racial attitudes, racial identification, and sex-role typing of the children. For the purpose of this discussion, only data from one RA and SC test will be discussed. The impact of sex, family type (1 or 2 parents) and where possible, the SES of the family, were examined.

The research procedures were as follows: Care was taken in the data collections. All of the children in the appropriate age group were tested, by trained Black graduate students. In the Mississippi and Michigan centers, all of the testing was done by John and me. Each examiner tested one half of the boys and

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one half of the girls, to control for the effect of sex of the examiner. Within each sex group, the same proportion of intact to non-intact family group which were maintained was approximately 75% to 25%, to control for the possible effect of father absence in the home. t tests were run on all of the data collected by the two examiners. No significant difference was found and the data were therefore combined. Two orders of presentation were used, to avoid the bias that may be introduced if one test was consistently presented first. In all cases, the racial identification procedure was presented last, to avoid contamination from this task to the responses for the other instruments. A total of six instruments were used.

Self concept was measured with the Thomas Self Concept Values tests, which asks 14 bi-polar questions of how the child views himself and how he perceives that he is viewed by three important reference persons; his mother, teachers, and "the other kids". These questions are asked in relation to his Polaroid picture. The use of his own picture helped eliminate the difficulties involved when the child is expected to identify with stick figures, cartoons, or pictures and drawings of other children. The responses are converted into standard scores with a mean of 50 and a SD of 10.

The racial attitudes and sex-role typing were assessed with the Williams and Roberson Preschool Racial Attitude Measure. (PRAM). PRAM I was used for the first three groups and PRAM II for the 1973 group, both comparable forms of the same test. In this test, the child is shown a picture of two figures, identical except for skin and hair color. A story is read to the child describing a person in either negative or positive terms. The child is then asked to select the person who appears in the story. The Race Identification score was obtained by counting the number of times the child correctly pointed to the appropriate figure in six drawings, when asked to point to a person who matched a specific racial label.

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Each child was asked to indicate three Black and three white figures, with labels presented in random order.

The analysis across groups is only partially complete, as I was able to obtain the last computer run last night. However, the analyses within the Miss. and Mich. sample are completed.

The subjects in these studies consisted of Black children, aged 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 years, who were enrolled in full day, year long day care programs, with an educational component.

The Mississippi sample was composed of 43 working class Ss, 20 boys and 23 girls. They were from Mound Bayou, a town founded by former slaves which has been able to remain in Black control. There is a great deal of pride existing within this town. This was considered an ideal place to test the hypothesis that children in stable, all Black communities will be able to develop stronger self concepts.

The Michigan sample contained 35 working class Ss, 16 boys and 19 girls. They lived in an integrated metropolitan area outside of Detroit. All of them were born in the North, although many of the parents had come up from the South to work in the automobile factories.

The Washington, D. C. I sample contained 68 Ss, working class, 41 boys and 27 girls. The D. C. II sample had 59 children, 31 boys and 28 girls in an all Black center, in a predominantly Black community.

Self Concept Results

(1) All four of the samples, and the two sub-samples, had good average self concepts, within one standard deviation of the mean of 50: Miss. M = 51.42; Mich. M = 46.63 D.C. I, M = 42.71; D.C. II, M = 49.88. See Tables 1 and 2.

2. The Mississippi children had significantly higher scores than the Michigan sample ($F = 9.31$, $F < .01$). See Table 3.

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(3) No sex difference was found within the Mississippi or Michigan group. ($F = 2.88$; 1,70 df).

(4) No difference was found between children from one- and two-parent homes for these two samples. ($F = 0.03$; 1,70 df). This could indicate that other forces must be at play within the non-intact family, the impact of the extended family support.

(5) In Mississippi only, the higher the self concept, the more accurate the use of appropriate race labels. ($r = .56$; $p < .01$).

(6) The highest self concept scores were obtained in the small African sub-sample ($M = 52.36$). The Indian sub-sample had a M of 49.45.

(7) Of the four reference groups, the children saw themselves more positively, than they felt they were perceived by their mothers, teachers, or peers.

(8) The children felt that the teachers held the lowest opinion of them of the three reference groups.

(9) The Southern children did have higher teacher reference scores than the Northern, significant at the .01 level. They felt themselves as being more highly perceived than did the Michigan children.

(10) Of the .14 bi-polar values scores the highest was given to the ability question, indicating that they felt capable and smart.

Race Attitude Results

(1) All four groups had very similar RA scores, their mean responses were out-group oriented, indicating a white preference. The RA scores obtained were: Miss. $M = 8.86$; Mich. $M = 8.71$; D.C. I, $M = 8.59$; and D.C. II, $M - 8.41$. See Table 1.

(2) In RA, no differences were found in demography ($F = 0.39$), sex of the child ($F = 0.30$) or family type ($F = 0.29$; 1,70 df).

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(3) The African sub-sample (M = 6.36) was the only one which approached our theoretical ideal RA score of 6 or lower. They also had the highest score on the Clark Doll test replication.

Race Identification Results (Miss. and Mich. only)

The Southern children were significantly more accurate than those in the North ($F = 7.58$; 1,70 df; $p < .01$). In fact, most of the Southern children were able to give perfect racial labels.

Results of Relationship Between RA and SC

On the whole no relationship between RA and SC was found, in 10 of the 11 such groups. The only relationship was found in the Mississippi boys, where the higher the self concept the more out-group oriented ($r = .534$; $p < .01$).

These data do tend to lend support to the idea that there is not a linear relationsip between RA and SC of these young children, with the exception of the Southern boys. These children were found to have strong positive total self concept scores. They do appear to have compartmentalized their views of themselves. While feeling good about themselves as persons, they still maintain a preference for the dominant out-group.

Now whether the relationship between these variables is a curvilinear one, cannot be established until I am able to make more computer analyses. However, I have charted these variables of the D.C. II sample against each other, dividing the groups on the mean scores. (See Fig. 1, 2, and 3).

Thomas SC data are presented in Fig. 2. 61% of the Ss had high SC scores, above the mean of 49.88 which itself was a good SC mean score, while only 37% had less stereotyped RA scores. 41% of the Ss fell into quadrent II, high SC scores and white orientation. Less distinct results were obtained with a different SC test, a modification of Engle's SC test, (Fig. 1). The same pattern remained: the largest

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cluster was in II, the high SC, white oriented; and the second highest was in IV, the lower SC, white oriented group.

These data tend to support the compartmentalize view of self concept and race attitude development. If further support for this view is observed, the negative view of the Black child that has been maintained may be altered. Much more empirical data needs to be obtained. There is a crucial need to share our findings with each other, as we are doing today. We must develop more positive ways of viewing the Black child, in order for us to perform one of our functions as Black Psychologists translating our knowledge into terms and forms that are useable for the parents who are involved in the process of socializing our Black children.

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Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Thomas (revised) Self Concept and Williams Racial Attitude for Black Samples and Foreign Sub Samples, with Appropriate Sex Comparisons

Group	Sex	N	Thomas Self Concept				Williams Race Attitude			
			M	SD	t	p	M	SD	t	p
1,2,										
Mississippi	Total	43	51.42	7.43			8.86	2.53		
1969	Boys	20	52.29	7.80			8.86	2.21		
	Girls	23	50.91	7.31			8.87	2.83		
Michigan	Total	35	46.63	10.16			8.71	3.22		
1969	Boys	16	50.69	8.65			8.94	3.13		
	Girls	19	43.21	10.28			8.53	3.37		
							(N=81)			
D. C. I	Total	68	42.71	11.17			8.59	2.65		
1972	Boys	41	45.08	11.47			8.77	2.45	0.04	n.s.
	Girls	27	40.80	10.08			8.00	2.92		
D. C. II	Total	59	49.88	10.65			8.41	2.88		
1973	Boys	31	50.61	9.27	0.54	n.s.	8.90	2.83	1.74	n.s.
	Girls	28	49.07	12.13			7.57	2.98		
African	Total	11	52.36	6.58			6.36	4.06		
1973	Boys	3	48.67	6.66			9.00	2.65		n.s.
	Girls	8	53.75	6.41			5.50	4.28		
Indian	Total	20	49.45	8.06			8.10	2.13		
1973	Boys	11	55.46	5.15	6.99	n.s.	8.00	2.37	0.23	n.s.
	Girls	9	42.11	3.33			8.22	1.92		

[1] See Table 3 for Thomas anova for Mississippi and Michigan

[2] See Table 4 for Race Attitude anova for Mississippi and Michigan

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Table 2

Means, and Standard Deviations of Engle Self Concept and Clark Racial Attitude for Washington, D. C. and Foreign Samples

Group	Sex	N	Engle Self Concept M	SD	t	Sig	Clark Race Attitude M	SD
D. C. I 1972	Total	72	24.72	4.91			--	--
	Boys	41	25.37	5.09	1.65	n.s.	--	--
	Girls	31	23.87	4.60			--	--
D. C. II 1973	Total	60	27.43	6.39			2.54	2.78
	Boys	31	28.10	6.31	0.86	n.s.	2.16	2.38
	Girls	29	26.72	6.10			2.67	2.83
African	Total	11	32.73	10.35			4.27	3.47
Indian	Total		22.65	6.18			0.85	1.39

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Table 3

Summary Table of Three Way Analysis of Variance of Self Concept Scores, Original and Modified Scoring, According to Demography, Sex, and Family Type of the Children

Source	df	Thomas Scoring Mean Sq.	F	Modified Scoring Mean Sq.	F
Demography (A)	1	260.24	4.03*	610.77	9.31**
Sex (B)	1	699.16	10.81**	188.80	2.88
Family (C)	1	79.74	1.23	1.67	0.03
A x B	1	24.56	0.38	29.46	0.45
A x C	1	173.96	2.69	243.11	3.71
B x C	1	98.72	1.53	16.81	0.26
A x B x C	1	785.51	12.15**	567.48	8.65**
Error	70	64.66		65.61	
Total	77				

* $p < .05$ (3.98; 1,70 df)

** $p < .01$ (7.01; 1,70 df)

Table 4

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Analysis of Variance of Racial Attitudes According to Demography, Sex and Family Type of the Children

Source	DF	Mean Square	F
Demography (A)	1	52.66	0.39
Sex (B)	1	40.21	0.30
Family (C)	1	36.07	0.29
A x B	1	75.15	0.55
A x C	1	1.22	0.01
B x C	1	12.04	0.09
A x B x C	1	66.96	0.50
Error	70	143.54	0.50
Total	77		